

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
MULTIPLE PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION NOMINATION

John S. Park Historic District  
Las Vegas, Clark County, Nevada

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**John S. Park Historic District  
Las Vegas, Nevada**

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**John S. Park Historic District, Clark County, Nevada**

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**John S. Park Historic District, Clark County, Nevada**

**Introduction**

20<sup>th</sup> Century Preservation, an independent historic preservation consulting firm under the employ of the City of Las Vegas Planning and Development Department, conducted the historic resource survey of the John S. Park historic district to formally inventory and evaluate the existing properties to determine eligibility of nomination to the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district. The survey was concentrated within the boundaries of the historic district which is essentially Las Vegas Boulevard and S. Ninth Street on the west and east, and Charleston Boulevard and Franklin Avenue on the North and South, respectively. For visual reference please see continuation sheet, Map of John S. Park Historic District.

The evaluation of the John S. Park neighborhood was based on the eligibility criteria of the National Register of Historic Places:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, association and,

- A. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history; or
- B. that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic value, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

The field survey and research was conducted between the months of January and June 2002. During the field survey each property was photographed and preliminary data, such as building descriptions, were collected. A Historic Resource Inventory Form provided by the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office was subsequently completed for each property determined to be a contributing resource within the district.

Archival research was conducted at the Nevada State Museum and Historical Society using historic phone directories and newspaper references. The Clark County Assessor's office was consulted for additional historic information; specifically, year of construction and historic

owner information. The City of Las Vegas Records Division was consulted for historic building permits which yielded information regarding additions and alterations, confirmed date of construction, and provided additional historic owner's names. Additional research was conducted through academic journals and other published works, personal interviews, reference manuals and historic photographs.

In summary, 20<sup>th</sup> Century Preservation has determined that the John S. Park historic district is eligible for nomination under Criterion A and Criterion C of the National Register of Historic Places based on a high level of existing historic integrity and the association of the historic building types and subdivision design with local and national historic occurrences and trends.

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**John S. Park Historic District, Clark County, Nevada**

## **7. Description**

The John S. Park Historic District is located south of downtown Las Vegas within what is currently referred to as the John S. Park Neighborhood. The John S. Park Historic District contains two adjacent historic subdivisions: the Park Place Addition, which began development in 1931, and the Vega Verde Addition, which began development in 1941. These two subdivisions have been combined under the "John S. Park Historic District" in accordance with the goals set forth in the "Historic John S. Park Neighborhood Plan," developed by the John S. Park Neighborhood Association under the guidance of the City of Las Vegas Neighborhood Services Department. This comprehensive plan, drafted in August 2001 and approved by the City of Las Vegas Planning Commission November 2001, defined the boundaries of the proposed historic district within the John S. Park neighborhood. These boundaries were designed to protect the most precious historic resources from commercial rezoning.<sup>1</sup> The merging of two separate historic subdivisions into one historic district is appropriate because it represents the evolution of suburban subdivisions in Las Vegas as it bracketed World War II.

The historic district in its entirety consists of 160 homes, 34 of which have been determined to be non-contributing, and a small park, which is also non-contributing. The general boundaries of the John S. Park Historic District are Las Vegas Boulevard and South Ninth Street to the west and east, and Charleston Boulevard and Franklin Avenue to the north and south, respectively. The earlier Park Place Addition is located on the western half of the historic district and currently includes the west side of Fifth Place and the west side of S. Sixth Street on the west and east, and the south side of Park Paseo and roughly Franklin Avenue on the north and south, respectively. The Vega Verde Addition is bounded by the east side of S. Sixth Street and the west side of S. Ninth Street on the west and east, and the north side of Park Paseo and the north side of Franklin Avenue on the north and south, respectively.

The street pattern of the subdivisions, unlike earlier subdivisions, was not laid out in accordance with the already existing street grid. The streets follow a north-south axis like the subsequent surrounding development of Las Vegas. In addition, the street pattern includes curvilinear streets with limited access from the busy commercial streets that bound the neighborhood. The Mary Dutton Park is located at the S. Eighth Street entrance from Charleston Boulevard. The park is used as a gateway to identify the entrance into the John S. Park Historic District

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<sup>1</sup> John S. Park Neighborhood Association. *The Historic John S. Park Neighborhood Plan*. Las Vegas: August 2001.

incorporating a large stone marker inscribed, "Welcome to the Historic John S. Park Neighborhood", installed in September of 2001.

The lot sizes throughout the historic district vary from approximately one-fifth to one-quarter of an acre for both Vega Verde and Park Place subdivisions. The larger lots are typically comprised of two combined lots as the typical lot size for the Vega Verde Addition, when originally platted, was sixty feet in width. The streets are typically narrow, ranging from thirty to thirty-six feet in width.

The construction dates of the homes begin in 1931 and continue until 1997 when the last of the homes within the historic district was built. Consequently there is a wide range of styles ranging from Period Revival to Ranch.

Speculators who purchased the land and sold the lots on demand to buyers developed both the Park Place Addition and the Vega Verde subdivision. With the exception of a few local contractors, such as R. Whitehead, who built four homes in the Vega Verde Addition, and Dan Plunkett, who built three homes, Franklin and Law was the predominant developer of the Vega Verde Addition. They sold the lots and offered buyers a choice of four home plans to choose from if they did not have their own. According to an original resident who purchased a Franklin and Law home, buyers were restricted to the use of Franklin and Law's chosen contractor,<sup>2</sup> which resulted in a somewhat consistent style and form, although occasionally some homes did vary. The typical Franklin and Law home had an L-shaped plan with the entrance located near the interior corner, a low stoop with a small porch roof and a stucco finish. Windows were usually multi-pane casement windows with metal frames. They were usually consistent in size with one centered on the front façade of the short leg of the L, and three located on the front façade of the long leg, with the end window as a three-sided bay window. Roofs were typically an intermediate pitch and cross-gabled with two end gables and a front gable over the short leg of the L.

The exceptions were few and typically limited to variations in plan such as a simple rectangular plan with a long porch, or a hipped roof. The size, proportions, and types of windows remained similar. In addition, Franklin and Law homes reflected the more traditional Ranch style, and did not evolve into the later contemporary Ranch style. A good example of the most common type of Franklin and Law home in the Vega Verde Addition is 1216 S. Seventh Street (1948). An example of the hipped roof variety is 829 Franklin Avenue (1947).

Most of the homes in the Vega Verde Addition that were not built by Franklin and Law had similar plans and roof forms, but the difference can sometimes be seen in the window types and varied sizes.<sup>3</sup> The notable exceptions are the large Neo-Tudor home at 818 Park Paseo (1947), and the more contemporary Ranch style homes mentioned above. In addition, two adjacent homes built by a local contractor, R. Whitehead at 720 and 730 Park Paseo, both built in 1950, are unique with small round windows, weeping mortar, and combination of window sizes and arrangement of panes.

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2 Personal interview with John S. Park Historic District resident Margaret McGhie. May 2002.

3 Franklin and Law windows were approximately 4' by 4' with twelve panes.

Because the Park Place Addition began development earlier than the Vega Verde Addition, many of the homes built in the early 1930s reflect the popular Period Revival style of the time, while the later homes begin to evolve into the post-war Ranch style. This style was the preferred style in the Vega Verde Addition, with a few homes built in the Minimal Traditional style. Although the homes within John S. Park Historic District reflect evolving style trends, they tend to retain a consistency of construction methods, materials, and a uniformity of setbacks, each with spacious front lawns. Construction methods are roughly split between wood frame and masonry using concrete block. Typical original exterior cladding consisted of stucco or brick veneer and the majority of the roofs were covered with composition shingle. Many of the homes have detached garages or other structures in the rear of the lots. The building records show that many garages were added to the house shortly after the initial construction, only to be converted into extra living space later. The windows are typically metal frame with multiple panes.

Over the years there have been many exterior alterations, mostly to the rear of the homes as homeowners added a room or a patio. Some of the homes have a large external chimney on the front façade. It was found during inspection of building records that these chimneys are not original to the house and most were installed during the early 1950s. In addition, the Franklin & Law buildings were built with air conditioning which came from a floor cooler situated in the basement of the house and was directed into the homes through vents in the lower part of the walls.<sup>4</sup> Most of the homes have since replaced this outdated system with modern central heating and air-conditioning units.

The overall condition of the neighborhood is good and continues to improve as younger professional families move into the homes and invest money into improvements. The property values in the neighborhood have been steadily rising, increasing by an average of \$10.00 per square foot since 1999. Residents of the neighborhood have formed the John S. Park Neighborhood Association in which they have outlined and pursued specific goals designed to improve and maintain the unique way of life the John S. Park neighborhood offers. The creation of the John S. Park Historic District and nomination to the National Register of Historic Places are two of these goals.

### Integrity

The John S. Park Historic District retains its historic integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Although some of the original residential properties along the main commercial corridor of Charleston Boulevard have been significantly altered or converted to commercial use, the loss of these historic resources has fortunately occurred on the outer edges of the historic district and does not affect the overall integrity.<sup>5</sup> The neighborhood was originally built as an entirely residential neighborhood. In fact, Franklin & Law Developers restricted the conversion of any property, in part or entirely, to commercial use.<sup>6</sup> The conversions occurred much later and only along the commercial streets that form the

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4 "Vega Verde Subdivision is Growing Rapidly". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. August 2, 1941.

5 Originally the Park Place Addition extended across Las Vegas Boulevard to include a small block bordered on the west by S. Fourth Street. See Section 10: Geographical Data for original plat map of the Park Place Addition.

6 Personal interview with John S. Park Historic District resident Margaret McGhie. May 2002.

boundaries for the district. The inclusion of any of these converted properties would only serve to undermine the integrity of the historic district.

Because the encroachment of commercial activity has been confined to the outer edge, the John S. Park Historic District has retained its historic setting. The neighborhood has always been surrounded by commercial development and chose upon its inception to exclude commercial within the confines of the boundaries. This is still largely true today, however this coveted element is currently threatened as a small minority of the residents would like to convert their homes to commercial use or sell to a commercial developer as has happened to much of the Las Vegas High School Historic District. It is for this reason the John S. Park Neighborhood Association was formed, in order to protect the unique lifestyle afforded by the location and historic setting.

The John S. Park Historic District contains some of the most distinguished residential architecture in Las Vegas. The Park Place Addition contains several good examples of the Tudor and Colonial Revival styles so popular in the 1920s and 1930s. The Vega Verde Addition is a largely untouched collection of World War II and post-World War II Ranch styles mixed with a few modern gems. External alterations that can be viewed from the street have thankfully been kept to a minimum. Although several garages have been added, especially in the Vega Verde Addition, the majority of these were added during the defined period of significance. In addition, the original street pattern has not been altered. The historic context remains largely intact and is reinforced by the narrow tree-lined streets.

The John S. Park Historic District retains integrity of materials and workmanship with the continued use of stucco or brick veneer on the majority of additions and alterations. In addition, the styles of the additions and alterations typically conform to those of the existing homes. The landscaping is largely intact with numerous large, old trees that line the streets and tower overhead. The John S. Park Historic District was historically associated with young professional families and still is today. The April issue of local magazine *Las Vegas Life* listed the John S. Park neighborhood as one of the "Ten Great Places" to live in Las Vegas, stating that it is known for its "young professionals, newly married and gay couples, and families with small children."

In summary, the John S. Park Historic District is a collection of historic homes that represent an association with historic occurrences and trends. Most importantly, those associations continue to be easily recognizable within the cohesive historic context that has survived throughout the years.



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**John S. Park Historic District, Clark County, Nevada**

**John S. Park Historic District Property List with Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources**

The determination for non-contributing resources within the John S. Park Historic District was based on construction date or retention of historic integrity. A date of 1952 was determined to be the cut-off date for contributing resources within the district, being fifty years prior to the date the National Register nomination was completed. It is expected that the remaining homes within the John S. Park neighborhood will be included within an addendum to the historic district in the future. In addition, the majority of the homes built in the early 1950s begin to exhibit a slightly more modern form and style, with a contemporary use of different types and styles of exterior materials.

With those buildings that do not contribute based on significantly compromised historic integrity, care was taken to consider the existing historic context, including original design qualities of the predominant styles seen in the John S. Park Historic District, as well as exterior materials that were typical and available during the pre-determined dates of significance. In addition, the seven qualities of integrity were considered. Those buildings that no longer retain either one or all of the following, including location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, were determined to be incompatible and inconsistent with existing historic context.

The Mary Dutton Park was determined to be a non-contributing resource due to compromised historic integrity. The park no longer retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship and feeling. The park was completely re-landscaped in 2001 with a desert landscape design, replacing entirely the original grass and trees which were planted when the park was donated during the early 1940s. In addition, the park no longer retains integrity of setting and association, as the majority of the homes within the John S. Park Historic District retain the original landscape, using grass, trees, and leafy shrubs.

Please see historic resource inventory forms for individual building descriptions, located in the Appendix, and Map of Non-Contributing Resources, a continuation sheet located in the Maps and Other Attachments section.

**Contributing and Non-Contributing resources by address:**

<u>1100 5<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Non-Contributing	Const. Date: 1997
<u>1101 5<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Non-Contributing	Const. Date: 1963
<u>1107 5<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1108 5<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1110 5<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1111 5<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1112 5<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1114 5<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Non-Contributing	Const. Date: 1966
<u>1115 5<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1118 5<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Non-Contributing	Multiple exterior alterations/additions including addition of second story, which is visible from street. This addition is not sympathetic to the original ranch form and does not maintain consistency of historic exterior materials.
<u>1122 5<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Non-Contributing	Multiple exterior alterations/additions including addition of second story and balcony, which is visible from street. This addition is not sympathetic to the building's original Tudor form and does not maintain consistency of historic exterior materials.
<u>1135 5<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1139 5<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1033 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1100 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Non-Contributing	Const. Date: 1955
<u>1101 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Non-Contributing	Const. Date: 1973
<u>1103 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Non-Contributing	Const. Date: 1974
<u>1105 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1107 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1108 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Non-Contributing	Multiple exterior alterations including replacement of a majority of the original front façade and addition of front porch in 1975 in a style incompatible with the existing historic context.
<u>1111 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Non-Contributing	Const. Date: 1959
<u>1112 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1119 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Non-Contributing	Multiple exterior alterations including alteration of the original front gable, the addition of a gabled porch roof, and the addition of thick brick posts

not consistent with the type of thin wood posts used for the Ranch style homes of this neighborhood during the dates of significance. Also, the use of river rock veneer is inconsistent with existing historic context.

<u>1122 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Non-Contributing	Const. Date: 1954
<u>1126 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Non-Contributing	Const. Date: 1955
<u>1127 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Non-Contributing	Const. Date: 1953
<u>1130 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1133 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1137 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Non-Contributing	Addition of enclosed front porch compromises original U-shaped plan, and is inconsistent with existing historic context.
<u>1140 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1141 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1144 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1255 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1302 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1206 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1207 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1212 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1213 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1216 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1217 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1220 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1221 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1226 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1227 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1230 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1231 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1236 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1239 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1240 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1241 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	

<u>1245 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1248 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1250 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1251 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>Mary Dutton Park</u>	Non-Contributing	Multiple alterations including introduction of desert landscape design and replacement of original vegetation planted when the park was donated during the early 1940s.
<u>1213 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1221 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1225 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Non-Contributing	Multiple alterations and additions, including the replacement of all original windows, the alteration of the roof form, and the addition of a free-standing wall, which compromises the original bay window form.
<u>1226 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1230 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1233 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1236 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Non-Contributing	Const. Date: 1956
<u>1239 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1240 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1245 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1248 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1249 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Non-Contributing	The front door has been relocated to the north façade of the house, which is inconsistent with existing historic context.
<u>1250 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Non-Contributing	The excessive use of stone veneer is not compatible with typical siding styles available during the dates of significance, and is inconsistent with existing historic context.
<u>1255 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Non-Contributing	Const. Date: 1955
<u>1256 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1260 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1261 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1263 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1264 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Non-Contributing	Const. Date: 1965
<u>1269 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	

<u>1272 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1275 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1278 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Non-Contributing	The addition of a large carport compromises integrity of design and association within the existing historic context. The carport obscures the original Ranch form with its large size and roof with large front gable.
<u>1279 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Non-Contributing	Multiple exterior alterations including replacement of all original multi-pane windows with oversized single pane windows inconsistent with existing historic context.
<u>1211 8<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1212 8<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1216 8<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1219 8<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Non-Contributing	A second, and possibly third gable has been added to the front of the house during a patio remodel. In addition, many of the original multi-pane windows have been replaced with single pane windows. The addition of the gable(s) and window replacement is inconsistent with existing historic context.
<u>1222 8<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1223 8<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1224 8<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1229 8<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1232 8<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1233 8<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Non-Contributing	The front eave has been altered, significantly compromising original Ranch form with distinct front-facing gable.
<u>1234 8<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Non-Contributing	Const. Date: 1953
<u>1239 8<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1240 8<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Non-Contributing	Multiple exterior alterations including enclosing the front porch, compromising the original U-shaped plan, and removal of original multi-pane windows where porch exists now, resulting in an appearance inconsistent with existing historic context.
<u>1244 8<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1245 8<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1249 8<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1250 8<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Contributing	
<u>1253 8<sup>th</sup> Place</u>	Non-Contributing	Multiple exterior alterations including replacement

of original multi-pane windows with diamond pane windows, and replacement of thin wood porch supports with large brick posts. These alterations are inconsistent with existing historic context.

1260 8<sup>th</sup> Place                      Contributing

1264 8<sup>th</sup> Place                      Contributing

1270 8<sup>th</sup> Place                      Non-Contributing      Multiple alterations including the relocation of front entrance to east side of building, and replacement of original multi-pane windows with two-pane sliding type inconsistent with existing historic context. The homes of John S. Park all had entrances on the front facade.

1276 8<sup>th</sup> Place                      Contributing

1280 8<sup>th</sup> Place                      Contributing

1201 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.                      Contributing

1205 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.                      Contributing

1211 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.                      Non-Contributing      Const. Date: 1954

1212 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.                      Contributing

1215 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.                      Non-Contributing      Const. Date: 1955

1218 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.                      Non-Contributing      Multiple exterior alterations including excessive use of stone veneer not compatible with existing or typical siding options available during the dates of significance. The same argument applies to the use of wood shingles underneath the front gables.

1219 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.                      Contributing

1223 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.                      Contributing

1224 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.                      Contributing

1228 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.                      Contributing

1229 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.                      Contributing

1235 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.                      Contributing

1236 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.                      Contributing

1239 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.                      Contributing

1240 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.                      Contributing

1243 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.                      Contributing

1244 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.                      Contributing

1249 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.                      Contributing

<u>1250 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1253 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1254 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1259 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1263 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1264 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1268 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1269 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1273 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1274 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1278 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>1279 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.</u>	Contributing	
<u>615 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>618 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>619 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>700 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>701 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>705 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>709 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>711 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>718 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>720 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>730 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>801 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>808 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>815 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>818 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>819 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>822 Park Paseo</u>	Non-Contributing	Multiple exterior alterations including replacement of original windows. Front porch has been enclosed, using Spanish Eclectic style elements such as arched openings, which is incompatible with the existing historic context. The typical Ranch style porch in the John S. Park Historic District used thin wood posts for supports.

<u>823 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>827 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>830 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>831 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>925 Park Paseo</u>	Contributing	
<u>615 Franklin</u>	Contributing	
<u>701 Franklin</u>	Non-Contributing	Const. Date: 1956
<u>809 Franklin</u>	Contributing	
<u>815 Franklin</u>	Contributing	
<u>819 Franklin</u>	Contributing	
<u>823 Franklin</u>	Contributing	
<u>829 Franklin</u>	Contributing	



## **Significance**

The John S. Park Historic District was named for Mr. John S. Park, an early resident of Las Vegas who became a renowned banker, civic leader and landowner. Much of the Park Place Addition and Vega Verde Addition were eventually constructed on land he purchased in the late 1920s with his son, William S. Park. The Parks built a large home on this property, no longer extant, and Dr. William S. Park lived there until his death in 1946.

The John S. Park Historic District is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C, as defined by the National Register of Historic Places. The John S. Park Historic District is a physical manifestation of significant local events and national trends in community development and architectural style. In addition, the John S. Park Historic District embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, and represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

The period of significance has been defined as 1931-1952. The John S. Park Historic District, comprised of two historic subdivisions, was developed primarily between the years 1931 and 1956. Not only does it contain some of the oldest homes in Las Vegas, it was one of the first neighborhoods in Las Vegas to incorporate the values of the Picturesque suburban ideal based on, in its earliest form, the Garden City principles developed in England during the nineteenth century.

These values, reflecting a secluded neighborhood with curvilinear streets in a park-like setting, were demonstrated first in America by Llewellyn Park in New Jersey and the Riverside Community near Chicago, Illinois. This suburban ideal was adopted by many pre-war suburban planners, eventually to be endorsed formally by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) as a pre-requisite to federal loan approval.<sup>7</sup> This was the case with the Vega Verde Addition.

Research of the FHA involvement in Las Vegas housing development has not revealed a prior subdivision that was approved for federal funding as a complete planned community. There were other subdivisions, including the Huntridge, Biltmore and Mayfair homes that were approved for FHA funding on or about the same time as the Vega Verde Addition. There are two main distinctions, however: the Huntridge, Biltmore and Mayfair subdivisions were built as wartime housing to ease the serious housing shortage occurring in Las Vegas during World War II. As a result, these neighborhoods were financed under a different FHA program. These two factors resulted in completely different neighborhoods from the Vega Verde homes, as the houses were built almost all at once in contrast to the build-on-demand development of the Vega Verde Addition.

## **Criterion A**

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<sup>7</sup> Ames, David. *National Register Bulletin on Suburban Development*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Draft copy still in revision. <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/whtnew.htm>> January 2002.

## *The Development of Las Vegas*

The physical development of the city of Las Vegas began in the mid-1800s as a small number of ranches nestled in a valley dependent upon rich artesian wells and gushing natural springs. The valley had long been the home to Native Americans who cherished the oasis-like environment ringed by mountains. In the late 1700s, Spanish missionaries and explorers began to forge a trail beginning in present day Santa Fe, New Mexico and ending in Los Angeles, California. The trail, called the Old Spanish Trail<sup>8</sup>, went north into central Utah and continued downward into southern Nevada. In 1829, the first known European explorers to the area deviated from the Old Spanish Trail in search of water and a shortcut west, inadvertently stumbling across the lush Las Vegas valley. Within two decades, a crude wagon road was established along the Old Spanish Trail between Salt Lake City and southern California. As mining became a major industry of the area with the discovery of vast deposits of minerals and precious metals, the road was used heavily by wagons to deliver mining supplies and equipment. Located roughly midway along the trail, the Las Vegas valley became a natural stop-off point for travelers to re-stock supplies and water from the Las Vegas Springs.<sup>9</sup> The abundant natural resources and prime location became the impetus that created the City of Las Vegas as it is known today.

In 1902, the wagon road was replaced by the San Pedro, Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad, which ran from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles. Construction through Las Vegas was completed in 1905. Las Vegas was chosen as a stop-off point for the trains to stock up on supplies and water. As a result, vast amounts of land was purchased on speculation resulting in two competing townships. The first township was settled by an engineer and surveyor named John T. McWilliams, who purchased eighty acres of government land just west of the railroad tracks. In early 1905, the town, advertised as "The Original Las Vegas Townsite," consisted of approximately 150 buildings including saloons, boarding houses, homes, and stores stocked with mining supplies as well as an ice house.

The second site was located on the east side of the tracks and was named Clark's Las Vegas Townsite for the owner of the railroad, Montana Senator William Clark. The land was ultimately owned by the railroad, which in 1905 staked out the blocks and lots and held an auction in May of that year. John S. Park, a clerk at the First State Bank, was the registration agent employed by the railroad to whom applicants submitted their choice of lots. Approximately half of the available 1,200 lots were sold within the first two days, purchased mostly by speculators from Los Angeles and Salt Lake City. The most valuable lots were closest to the train depot located at the intersection of Main and Fremont Streets. The depot, and consequently the freight loading and unloading ramps, were located on the east side of the tracks, making it difficult for carts to cross over the embankment. Competition from Clark's townsite and the inconvenient access to transportation and necessary mining and ranching supplies caused the McWilliams' townsite to lose favor and eventually dwindle to a few small tents and buildings. (See continuation sheet, Map of Original Clark's Las Vegas Townsite)

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<sup>8</sup> A section of the Old Spanish Trail was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on August 22, 2001.

<sup>9</sup> Las Vegas Springs, an archaeological site, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on December 14, 1978.

Clark's Las Vegas townsite originally encompassed 170.5 acres bordered on the north and south by Stewart and Garces Avenues, and on the east and west by Main and Fifth Streets, respectively. The street plan was laid out at right angles to the tracks, which ran twenty-seven degrees off north to achieve the most direct path across the valley. The blocks were 300 by 400 feet with individual lots of 25 by 140 feet. Typically, the individual blocks faced northwest and southeast and were generally uniform in size and layout within the blocks, with the exception of those facing Fremont Street. These were turned ninety degrees to take advantage of the main retail corridor frontage. Streets were 80 feet wide and 20-foot wide alleys bisected each block.<sup>10</sup>

Las Vegas became an incorporated city and adopted its first charter on March 16, 1911. At the time of incorporation, the city encompassed 19.18 square miles, and had approximately 800 inhabitants, less than 1 percent of the states total population. Fremont and Main Streets developed as the main commercial arteries of Las Vegas. Main Street ran parallel to the railroad tracks and the majority of the businesses were dedicated to the railroad. Fremont Street became the town center with a bank, post office, and retail shops occupying approximately the first two and one-half blocks. The remaining blocks of Fremont Street between Third and Fifth Streets were developed as Las Vegas's first exclusive residential area. These homes, built mostly in the Bungalow style with Craftsman details, were demolished during the 1930s and 1940s due to commercial expansion eastward along Fremont Street.<sup>11</sup>

The focus on development was primarily within Clark's Las Vegas Townsite. The remaining blocks were developed mainly for residential use with the railroad dedicating four blocks at the south end for employee housing, building a total of sixty-four small cottage-like units.<sup>12</sup> However it was not long before the city began to expand, extending the original grid eastward. Developers began to plat subdivisions as early as 1905, selling individual lots as they were purchased. Many of these homes were built in the popular Bungalow style, as well as Spanish Eclectic, Tudor and Colonial Revival styles. However, building within these subdivisions was slow with minimal population and water facilities to support them until the building boom period in the late 1920s.

Congress passed the Boulder Canyon Progress Act in 1928, allowing for the construction of Boulder Dam, now called Hoover Dam. Construction began in 1931 and was to have a significant impact on the economic and physical development of Las Vegas. While the rest of the country was suffering heavily during the Great Depression, Las Vegas boomed as thousands of laborers and their families arrived to work on the dam, spending their hard-earned pay in the city of Las Vegas. In addition, the dam, touted as "The Eighth Wonder of the World," increased tourism to Las Vegas substantially. Concurrently, the State of Nevada repealed gambling prohibition and liberalized its divorce laws, shortening residency requirements from three months to only six weeks. The population of Las Vegas nearly doubled between 1920 and 1930

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10 Paher, Stanley W. *Las Vegas: As it Began—As it Grew*. Las Vegas: Nevada Publications, 1971.

11 Geary, Kim, Jane P. Kowalewski, and Frank Wright. *Historic Resources of Central Las Vegas*. Las Vegas: Nevada Historical Society, 1985.

12 The Las Vegas Railroad Cottage Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on December 22, 1987.

increasing from 2,304 to 5,165, and again in 1940 with 8,422.<sup>13</sup>

In addition to the dam, several other local projects were funded entirely or in part with federal programs initiated by President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. Programs such as the Civil Works Administration (CWA), Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), and the Public Works Administration (PWA) participated in projects in Las Vegas. Through these agencies, improvements and expansions were made to the city's sewer system, streets, and recreational facilities in and near the downtown area between 1933 and 1934. All of these factors served to extricate Las Vegas from its economic dependency on the railroad.<sup>14</sup>

### *John S. Park*

During the mid- to late-1920s residential expansion continued with a few scattered developments being laid out along a north-south and east-west axis, breaking away from the original grid set by the railroad tracks. One such community began in the then remote southeast section of the city on land purchased by John S. Park and his son, Dr. William S. Park in 1925.

John S. Park arrived in Las Vegas in 1905 at the age of 53 to serve as cashier and eventual owner of the First State Bank. In 1906, he organized and became the first president of the Consolidated Power and Telephone Company, which eventually became Southern Nevada Power Company. He was the first worshipful master of the Las Vegas Masonic lodge and was involved in other civic and fraternal organizations. As a founding member of the County Division Committee, Park was instrumental in creating Clark County, named after Senator William Clark, with Las Vegas as the county seat. At 73 years old, John S. Park purchased land south of Charleston Boulevard and east of Las Vegas Boulevard, then Fifth Street with his son, a local dentist, and built a home on the property.<sup>15</sup>

By 1928, the Parks had platted a subdivision called the Park Place Addition and began to sell the lots individually. The property was considered remote at the time, although not for long. During the early 1930s, with the construction of the Las Vegas High School on Seventh Street and Bridger, the blocks surrounding the school began to fill in with residences.<sup>16</sup> John S. Park's wife passed away in 1931 and the devastated Park began spending more and more time at a family home in California until his death in 1939. Park's son, William, lived in the Park home until his sudden death of a heart attack in 1946. William S. Park was, among many other things, an expert on archeology and had dedicated an entire room in his house to a large collection of pottery, which he had painstakingly pieced together from tiny shards. Upon his death, Park willed the entire collection to the Las Vegas High School.<sup>17</sup>

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13 Land, Barbara and Land, Myrick. *A Short History of Las Vegas*. Reno, Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 1999.

14 Geary, Kim, Jane P. Kowalewski, and Frank Wright. *Historic Resources of Central Las Vegas*. Las Vegas: Nevada Historical Society, 1985.

15 "Death Takes John S. Park, Vegas Pioneer, in California Last Eve". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. November 3, 1939.

16 The Las Vegas High School Historic Neighborhood District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on January 30, 1991.

17 "Dr. William S. Park Dies Suddenly in [Boulder City]". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. February 25, 1946.

### *The Park Place Addition*

Originally the Park Place Addition included a small block between Fourth and Fifth Streets and another block between Fifth Place and Sixth Streets. The north and south boundaries were roughly Charleston Boulevard and Franklin Avenue, which was originally planned to continue westward across Las Vegas Boulevard but was never completed. Today the Park Place Addition includes the west side of Fifth Place and the west side of Sixth Street, with a north and south boundary of Park Paseo, formerly Division Street, and Franklin Avenue, respectively. (See continuation sheet, Maps of Original Plat of Park Place Addition and Plat Location)

Although the earliest subdivisions of Las Vegas could be defined as suburbs, these additions had more of an urban feel with their proximity to downtown and conformance with the orthogonal grid plan. The Park Place Addition was designed with an attempt at creating a more rural setting. It was a physical representation of the economic growth of the city as well as the changing trend of neighborhood development arising from the influence of the automobile. The individual no longer needed to live within walking distance of his place of employment or public transportation. Subdivisions could be built with decreased density, allowing more space per lot. In addition, homes could be built with more street frontage and garages became respectable, moving closer to the home and offering a prominent driveway.

Possibly one of the most significant changes to occur to the development of the subdivision of the 1920s was the popularity of the secluded curvilinear interior streets, influenced by upper-class residential developments such as Riverside, Illinois, and Llewellyn Park, New Jersey. These prototype American suburbs were based on the Garden City principles developed by city planners in England during the nineteenth century. Although, the Park Place Addition did not contain curvilinear streets, it also did not strictly conform to the original street grid, and Fifth Place was not accessible directly from Charleston Boulevard, providing the residents a sense of privacy and security.<sup>18</sup>

The Park Place Addition was an elite neighborhood, filled with political and business leaders of the Las Vegas community. Some of the early noteworthy residents are listed below:

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 1100 S. Sixth Street | (Demolished) This home was built for attorney Artemus Ham who was one of the first residents of S. Sixth Street. <sup>19 20</sup>   |
| 1012 S. Sixth Street | (Relocated) The home of District Attorney Harley H. Harmon. Harmon later sold the house to J. Kell Houssels who was one-time part owner of the Las Vegas Club and later became principal owner of the Tropicana Hotel and Casino on Las Vegas Boulevard. The Houssels house has been fully restored and moved to the University of Nevada-Las Vegas campus. |

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18 Ames, David. *National Register Bulletin on Suburban Development*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Draft copy still in revision. <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/whtnew.htm> January 2002.

19 "Residence of A. W. Ham is Completed". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. July 15, 1933.

20 "A Lawyer Watches Las Vegas Grow". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. September 2, 1963.

1108 S. Sixth Street	This was the home of Ryland Taylor, district judge and chairman of the Clark County Republican Committee. Taylor was a partner of Ham. <sup>21</sup>
1112 S. Sixth Street	Home of Dr. Zigmund Starzynski who was one-time president of the Clark county Medical Society. With three other doctors, Starzynski introduced group medical practice to Clark County. <sup>22</sup>
1130 S. Sixth Street	This was home to Frank Gusewelle who was Chairman of the Board of County commissioner, Chairman of the Hospital Board and active in many social organizations with his wife, Juanita. <sup>23</sup>
1144 S. Sixth Street	Home of Bryan Bunker who, with his brother, owned Bunker Brother's Mortuary which is still in operation at the time of this survey. <sup>24</sup> Bryan Bunker sold the home to Ray Germain, a state assemblyman and one-time president of the Las Vegas Club.
1255 S. Sixth Street	This was the home of Frank "Scoop" Garside who was very well known locally as the one-time editor and publisher of the <i>Tonopah Times</i> and the <i>Las Vegas Review-Journal</i> . <sup>25</sup>

The residents of Fifth Place were equally as noteworthy:

1101 Fifth Place	(Demolished) The home of politician and civic leader Archie C. Grant. <sup>26</sup>
1108 Fifth Place	The home of Earl Davison, another Las Vegas pioneer who arrived in Las Vegas in 1908 and worked as a miner, hoist engineer and blacksmith until becoming plant manager of Pacific Fruit Express at the ice plant for the railroad. He became County Commissioner in 1930, commander of the local American Legion post, and worshipful master of the Las Vegas Masonic lodge in 1927 and 1929. <sup>27</sup>
1111 Fifth Place	The home of physician J. N. Van Meter.
1115 Fifth Place	The home of Elmer Mikkelson who arrived in Las Vegas in 1918 and eventually became the Shell Oil distributor for all of Southern Nevada. He was a founder of the Bank of Nevada and served as

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21 "A Lawyer Watches Las Vegas Grow". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. September 2, 1963.

22 "Medical Unit Opens Clinic in Las Vegas". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. January 2, 1948.

23 "Vegas Vignettes: Frank Gusewelle". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. April 11, 1948.

24 "Vegas Vignettes: Bryan Bunker". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. April 4, 1948.

25 "Vegas Pioneer Frank Garside Succumbs Here". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. September 30, 1962.

26 "Vegas Vignettes: Archie C. Grant." *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. November 20, 1947.

27 "Vegas Vignettes: Earl F. Davison." *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. November 11, 1948.

director for many years.<sup>28</sup>

1139 Fifth Place

The home of attorney V. Gray Gubler who was one-time head of the Nevada Bar Association. He was also head of the Las Vegas chapter of the March of Dimes and served on the Welfare Board.

### *Economic Decline and the Federal Housing Administration*

With the completion of Boulder Dam in 1935, the Las Vegas economy declined as many of the dam workers and their families departed to search for employment. New Deal agencies were active throughout the 1930s, funding entirely or in part several projects, however, after 1934 the focus shifted from federal buildings and schools to recreational facilities and an airport to attract visitors. The wide-open frontier image was promoted to tourists as a means to supplement the slowing Las Vegas economy once so prosperous with construction projects and the railroad industry.<sup>29</sup>

The Housing Act of 1934 created the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), which was perhaps the single most significant factor of the creation of the suburb. The program insured long-term mortgages made by private lenders for home construction and sale. Prior to the Housing Act, mortgages would cover only one-half to two-thirds of the appraised value of the property and required a down payment of at least 30%. The FHA reduced the down payment requirement to as low as 10%.<sup>30</sup> With the economic slump, Las Vegas was experiencing in the mid- to late-1930s, the FHA could not have arrived at a better time.

The Las Vegas FHA representative was a man named George Franklin, Sr. who arrived in Las Vegas in 1934 to initiate the FHA program and operate a real estate business. Franklin was formerly a mechanical and aeronautical engineer who designed and built the Franklin 16-cylinder aircraft engine. The financial crash of 1929 forced him to seek other means of employment. His first real estate office in Las Vegas was located in the Federal Building on Stewart Street.<sup>31</sup> In 1939, he built a home on 1112 Fifth Place where he operated his real estate and development business and continued to serve Las Vegas as the FHA representative.<sup>32</sup> The FHA would play a major role in suburban development during and following World War II.

### *World War II*

Whatever economic downturn Las Vegas faced during the late 1930s, preparations for World War II would prove to be its salvation. To begin, the federal government was able to exploit Boulder Dam, which provided inexpensive power and water to a remote area. The government, fearing an attack on the West Coast, began feverishly building military bases and war industry plants throughout the western United States. In Las Vegas, Basic Magnesium and the Army Air

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28 "Private Funeral Service Held for Vegas Pioneer". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. March 9, 1966.

29 Hess, Alan. *Viva Las Vegas: After Hours Architecture*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1993.

30 Wright, Gwendolyn. "Building the Dream" New York: Pantheon Books, 1981.

31 The Las Vegas Post Office and Courthouse was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on February 10, 1983.

32 "George Franklin in Real Estate Work Since '34". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. May 9, 1961.

Gunnery Range were completed in 1941. The construction and operation of these military facilities had a significant effect on the development of Las Vegas.<sup>33</sup>

In 1940, the United States Army Air Corps came to Las Vegas to determine whether the community airport could be used as a training facility. Western Express owned the existing airport, and to accommodate the military, they sold the land to the city, which in turn leased it to the federal government. In 1941, the Las Vegas Air Gunnery School opened with nearly 2,000 men stationed at the airfield. Over the course of the war, the influx of workers, contractors, business, and military personnel nearly doubled the population of Las Vegas, which was 8,422 in 1940. By 1943, approximately 8,000 servicemen were stationed at the airfield, rising to nearly 11,000 by 1946. The servicemen and workers for the related industries did much to boost the Las Vegas economy as they spent money on entertainment, casinos, and bars. After the war ended, the military retained ownership of the base, and commercial air traffic was moved to another facility, now McCarran Airport. In 1950, the air base became Nellis Air Force Base, named after William Harrell Nellis, a soldier from Las Vegas who was killed in WWII.<sup>34</sup> Also in 1940, the United States Army began building Camp Sibert, an army barracks in nearby Boulder City, Nevada, to protect Boulder Dam from attack. Later named Camp Williston, the base accommodated 27 officers and 700 men, contributing further to the local economy.<sup>35</sup>

In 1941, Basic Magnesium Incorporated, a company that mined magnesium in Gabbs, Nevada for the production of military weapons, signed a contract with the federal government to construct a processing plant in the Las Vegas valley halfway between Las Vegas and Boulder City. Again, the location was convenient due to the availability of water and power from Hoover Dam. By July 1941, the plant was under construction, employing nearly 14,000 workers. Upon completion in 1943, the plant employed more than 6,000 workers. Most of the employees were housed in a newly constructed company town called Henderson but were contributing to the Las Vegas economy in much the same way as the servicemen. Basic Magnesium closed in 1944, leaving as many as 13,000 employees to search for work elsewhere.<sup>36</sup>

As a result, much like the rest of the country at war, Las Vegas began to experience an increasingly alarming shortage of housing for the incoming laborers, families of servicemen, and employees in the service industry. Much like the Depression years, families were living in cars and hotel rooms, doubling up in accommodations or partaking in the "share your home" programs where families with extra rooms rented to those in need.<sup>37</sup> Rent hiking reached scandalous proportions and tourists were being turned away as there were no available accommodations.<sup>38</sup>

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33 Paher, Stanley W. *Las Vegas: As it Began—As it Grew*. Las Vegas: Nevada Publications, 1971.

34 Land, Barbara and Land, Myrick. *A Short History of Las Vegas*. Reno, Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 1999.

35 Moehring, Eugene P. "Home Front: The Battle of Las Vegas in World War II". <<http://www.geocities.com>> September 2002.

36 Land, Barbara and Land, Myrick. *A Short History of Las Vegas*. Reno, Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 1999.

37 "Nevada War Workers Are Housed in 7,301 New Units". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. September 11, 1944.

38 "Rent Hiking in Las Vegas Faces Federal Probe". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. July 18, 1941.



In 1941, President Roosevelt signed an amendment to the Federal Housing Act creating Title VI, making possible the mass construction of FHA financed homes. In order to qualify for Title VI, a town had to be declared a defense area, which Las Vegas was in 1941.<sup>39</sup> Within the scope of Title VI, the FHA was permitted to finance construction of homes by private builders and contractors. Under normal circumstances, the FHA could finance only homes that were occupied by the owners. The new system of financing permitted a builder to secure financing for as many houses as the builder could construct. In addition, a Title VI mortgage allowed the home-buyer to purchase the home without a down payment, by paying equity payments over and above the rent, until ten percent of the purchase price is accumulated. The ten percent served as the down payment, and the buyer could discontinue the equity payments and pay only the amount of the mortgage payment.

Under Title VI, FHA limited the purchase price to \$4,000 for a single family home.<sup>40</sup> There were three major Las Vegas neighborhoods built in 1941 that qualified for Title VI financing: the Biltmore, Huntridge,<sup>41</sup> and Mayfair. Biltmore Homes had 300 houses planned for the area just north of downtown, and Huntridge Homes had 536. The Huntridge neighborhood is located directly east of the Vega Verde subdivision. The Biltmore, Huntridge, and Mayfair developments were built specifically to house non-commissioned officers, civilian employees of the air base, and Basic Magnesium and their families. These developments received "priority" status under H-3, a division of Title VI. Priority status meant that all available housing funds and materials goes to returning soldiers and their families.<sup>42</sup>

An important distinction between these three neighborhoods and the Vega Verde subdivision is that, for several reasons, the Vega Verde subdivision did not receive funding under Title VI. To begin, Vega Verde homes were custom homes, built on demand. The prices ranged from \$5,000 to \$12,000, with a very few selling for \$15,000 and above.<sup>43</sup> In addition, the Vega Verde homes seemed to pay little attention to the shortage of building materials during the war. Beginning in late 1945 lumber was extremely scarce,<sup>44</sup> however many of the homes were built with wood frame construction. The utility companies were still under "priority" rule until 1946. Residents were fighting for the installation of water for fire protection, streetlights, and pavement as late as 1947.<sup>45</sup><sup>46</sup> Between 1941 and 1945, building in the Vega Verde subdivision was a slow process with a total of 36 homes built. The most productive year was 1942 with fifteen homes, the least being 1944 with only a single home built. There were many factors that contributed to this, all or in part related to the outbreak of World War II.

Another important distinction is the style of the homes and method of construction in the Title VI neighborhoods that resulted from this type of financing. For instance, the Biltmore homes

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39 "FHA Title VI is Approved Today For Las Vegas". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. June 23, 1941.

40 "FHA May Approve Title VI Housing Plan for Las Vegas". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. June 16, 1941.

41 The Huntridge Theater, a movie theater built to serve the Huntridge neighborhood, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on July 22, 1993.

42 "Housing Relief Hope Dim". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. February 28, 1945.

43 City of Las Vegas Building and Safety Records Department.

44 "Home Building Boom Here Seen". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. August 24, 1945.

45 According to Eugene P. Moehring in *Resort City in the Sunbelt: Las Vegas 1930 - 1970*, a possible reason for this was that the utility companies feared a mass exodus of this and other wartime neighborhoods after the war was over.

46 "City Promises Cooperation in Vega Verde Improvements". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. August 7, 1947.

were built entirely from concrete block, which was readily available and did not require the use of restricted war materials. In addition, the style of the earliest Biltmore homes is very similar to the FHA prescribed minimum four-room house with one bathroom.<sup>47</sup> This style was a holdover from the Housing Act of 1934, which established the FHA to promote affordable housing. In contrast, the Vega Verde homes were almost entirely Ranch-style, which were typically more spacious and costly than the smaller Biltmore and Huntridge homes. And finally, the majority of the Vega Verde homes were built on demand resulting in a more varied array of elevations and plans than the Biltmore, Huntridge, and Mayfair subdivisions.<sup>48</sup>

The role of the FHA should not be underestimated in World War II suburban development. In order to qualify for federal financing, developers had to meet FHA standards. In addition to providing government financing and low interest rates, neighborhoods insured by the FHA were rarely located within the city, and the exclusion of certain racial and economic groups was stipulated in the regulations. FHA regulations also determined street layout and to some extent, housing type. The regulations favored the model of the early nineteenth century picturesque residential developments. These early neighborhoods were in reaction to the rapid industrialization and urbanization of the United States, enforcing the ideal of the home as a sanctuary from the noxious and stressful city. Of course, only the wealthy could afford to live on the outskirts of the city, which was the major employer of the poor.<sup>49</sup>

The suburban ideal of World War II was based on these elite subdivisions. The most recognized prototype of the picturesque suburban development in America is Llewellyn Park, New Jersey, designed by Alexander Jackson Davis in 1857. Davis introduced the curved streets and "natural," park-like setting with single family homes situated on irregular lots with varying setbacks. In the 1930s, Greenbelt communities built by the federal government began to combine the design aspects of the Picturesque development with emerging ideas to accommodate the automobile within the suburban development by creating a hierarchy of roads ranging from service roads (alleys) to parkway roads, which connected the community to the city. The FHA's comprehensive review process made the curvilinear subdivision design the standard of both good real estate investment practice and local planning, eventually becoming the legally-required form of new residential development in many cities in the United States.<sup>50</sup>

By the 1940s, the Garden City principles had taken a firm hold in American suburban development, changing forever the face of peripheral communities. Suburbs built during the war shared distinct physical characteristics such as low density and architectural similarity. In addition, homes built during this time were more attainable financially due to the development of mass-production techniques by large corporations who standardized housing components and methods of construction.<sup>51</sup>

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47 "Homes Arising in Biltmore Tract, First to be Ready in 40 Days". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. February 10, 1942.

48 In *Resort City in the Sunbelt: Las Vegas 1930-1970*, Eugene P. Moehring defines the Huntridge neighborhood as one of the first subdivisions, "where homes were built upon the land and sold as a package to the buyers", as opposed to "the town's early developers [who] merely subdivided parcels and laid out streets [and] did not erect houses for sale". (pg. 236)

49 Wright, Gwendolyn. "Building the Dream" New York: Pantheon Books, 1981.

50 Palen, John. "The Suburbs". New York: McGraw Hill, 1995.

51 Wright, Gwendolyn. "Building the Dream" New York: Pantheon Books, 1981.

The Park Place Addition was intended to be an example of the ideal suburban principles: a refuge for the wealthy in a country-like setting with spacious lots and custom homes. The Park Place Addition was built on the south edge of the city where, during the 1930s, there was very little existing commercial and residential development. However, this was all to change with the onset of World War II. Suburban housing development in Las Vegas became more of a necessity than a luxury due to the severe housing shortage. Coupled with the fact that the FHA rarely financed loans for new construction or pre-existing homes within the inner city, home building was concentrated where large amounts of available and affordable land was available.

### *The Vega Verde Addition*

In 1941, George Franklin, along with partner Frank Beam, purchased 55 acres of land directly east of the Park Place Addition from William S. Park and Mr. and Mrs. LeRoy and Mary Dutton.<sup>52</sup> The Duttons arrived in Las Vegas from Lincoln, Nebraska in 1919 in search of a drier climate for health reasons. They settled into a small house on six acres just south of Charleston Boulevard and began to farm the land. Soon after, they purchased an additional 19 acres from John S. Park, bringing the total to 25 acres. The previous owners of the land had already planted an orchard and many flowers and vegetables. When the Duttons purchased the additional acres from Park, they added to the orchard and Mrs. Dutton began to sell the first commercial flowers in Las Vegas. In addition, the Duttons raised chickens and kept bees on the property for cultivation of honey. In 1934, Mr. Dutton passed away, leaving the widow and one son to manage the farm. In 1940, Mrs. Dutton applied for an FHA loan to develop 15 of the acres she owned and 10 of the acres that belonged to her son for residential use. This was one of the first such projects in Las Vegas. Government officials in Washington D. C. turned down several plans before Mrs. Dutton donated one and one-half acres to the newly developing Huntridge neighborhood in the early 1940s, and sold and donated the remainder of her land to George Franklin and Frank Beam.<sup>53</sup> A portion of the donated land went to the creation of the Mary Dutton Park which is located at the southwest corner of S. Eighth Street and Charleston Boulevard.<sup>54</sup> (See continuation sheet, Map showing streets laid out for Vega Verde Addition)

After purchasing the land from Mrs. Dutton, Franklin and Beam subdivided the land into streets and building lots, laid out water lines, and sold the individual lots to prospective owner-residents, speculators, or to builders who bought a few parcels at a time and built houses on them. The streets and lots were laid out in accordance with FHA regulations, incorporating some of the values of the nineteenth century Picturesque suburban landscape with the narrow, curvilinear streets and large lots with sixty feet of frontage each.<sup>55</sup> Like the Park Place Addition, access to the neighborhood was limited with only two entrances from Charleston Boulevard. Alleys were not built because the FHA did not approve of them until later. Because the Vega Verde Addition followed FHA regulations, prospective residents could apply for FHA financing

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52 "New Subdivision to Have Building". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. February 26, 1941.

53 "Las Vegas Park Once Her Dooryard". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. November 20, 1964.

54 The Mary Dutton Park is included within the historic district boundaries, however it is not considered a contributing resource due to the replacement of the original landscape consisting of trees, shrubs, flowers and grass with native desert plants and gravel.

55 "New Subdivision to Have Building". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. February 26, 1941.

to purchase a home.

Frank Beam's partnership with Franklin was short, ending with Beam's death of a heart attack at age 62 in 1941, only months after he and George purchased the land. This would have been a mutually beneficial partnership as Beam Lumber Company was to supply most of the lumber for construction. In 1945, a partnership was formed between George Franklin and John Law, who was a chief petty officer in charge of recruiting for the U. S. Navy in Las Vegas. The new partnership was Franklin & Law Developers. Together they sponsored the building of the majority of the homes in the eastern half of the Vega Verde Subdivision. The housing shortage was still considered critical, however many of the Vega Verde homebuyers qualified for individual FHA and Veteran's Assistance loans.<sup>56</sup> With the restriction of war materials being lifted in 1945, Vega Verde enjoyed a resurgence in home building, with 25 homes constructed in 1946, as opposed to nine in 1945, and one in 1944. The same was occurring throughout Las Vegas as new construction and expansions of hotels and other commercial institutions increased, as well as churches and a new hospital.<sup>57</sup>

The end of World War II was a mixed blessing for Las Vegas, as the city began to prepare for the loss of a large portion of its population due to the possible closing of the Army Air Gunnery Range. City boosters, including Mayor E. W. Cragin, traveled to Washington D.C. to assess the feasibility of maintaining the air base for permanent military use. Eventually, an agreement was reached and Western Express, the civilian airport, was moved and the air base was deeded to the federal government for one dollar. Due to mounting tensions with the Russians, the base remained open and active and was eventually renamed Nellis Air Force Base, after William H. Nellis, a one-time resident of Searchlight who had fallen in World War II. By 1951 the total personnel at Nellis had risen to from 2,200 in 1949 to 4,800, including civilian employees. Under the Federal Housing Act, the federal government assumed responsibility for the construction of 400 houses on base for officers and enlisted men. In addition, approximately 1,100 units were built on base by private developers for military families, with the remaining personnel to live off base.

The air base was only one worry. Basic Magnesium Incorporated was ordered closed in 1944, resulting in a mass exodus of many of its employees. School enrollment fell by more than two-thirds and more than half of the homes in surrounding Henderson became vacant. Local government scrambled to find several industrial firms to rent the vast complex. It was difficult to find a private buyer for the plant because the city of Henderson was included in the assets. Eventually, A new Basic Management Incorporated was created to manage the plant. The new company was made up of representatives from each tenant corporation. The government assumed non-interest mortgages and notes and advanced the corporation \$300,000 as a reserve fund. In 1948, the title was transferred to the state of Nevada for 24 million dollars and one dollar down. The plant remained open as tenants were found and the population of Henderson boomed with the sale of private lots. Many families returned to Las Vegas and Henderson to work for the air base and at the industrial plant.

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<sup>56</sup> "New Realty Development". *Las Vegas Review Journal*. July 14, 1945.

<sup>57</sup> Geary, Kim, Jane P. Kowalewski, and Frank Wright. *Historic Resources of Central Las Vegas*. Las Vegas: Nevada Historical Society, 1985.

In order to diversify the economy, the city began again to focus on attracting tourism. In 1945, the nationally-known advertising firm of J. Walter Thompson was hired to create an image of fun and freedom from moral laws and restraints. The agency campaigned nationally with ads in the New York City dailies and special interest magazines throughout the United States. In 1947, the firm lost the contract to West-Marquis who pioneered the logo of waving cowboy, "Vegas Vic," whose image graced promotional material promising "fun in the sun" on the western frontier.

By 1950, the population of Las Vegas had increased to 24,624, tripling again from 1940. The city continued to focus on growth, looking for additional ways to increase jobs and attract tourists. In 1950, the government announced plans to begin testing nuclear weapons on a portion of the Las Vegas Bombing and Gunnery Range at Frenchman and Yucca flats, approximately sixty miles north of Las Vegas. Aside from providing employment, the city invited tourists to stay and visit the blasts. Hotels sponsored all-night parties and a myriad of attractions from specialized drinks to business establishments were prefaced with "Atomic."

Las Vegas began experiencing another economic boom, as was the rest of post-war United States. This was evidenced in large part by trends in the home construction and suburban development industry. Mass suburbs were springing up all over the United States, made possible by further streamlining of the construction process using standardized materials and components. In addition, many new homebuyers continued to take advantage of the federal government's Veteran's Administration mortgage guarantees and FHA mortgage insurance. Many returning soldiers bought homes in the Vega Verde Addition, as well as military and civilian families employed by Nellis Air Force Base and the swiftly advancing gaming industry.

It was not until the late 1940s and early 1950s that the wide-open spaciousness and informality of the modern suburban family home gained mass popularity, although it had originally been developed in the early twentieth century by Frank Lloyd Wright and the Prairie School. In this later period, the ideal California Modern style expressed the carefree consumerism most desired, and more readily attainable, after the constrictive years of World War II. Consumer choice increased with a barrage of new and futuristic products designed to improve efficiency in daily home life. The typical suburban home gradually became larger, expanding on the Ranch style while becoming lower with a distinct horizontality, incorporating a more contemporary design element. Much of this was due to the simple need for more space to accommodate the suddenly larger families as a result of the baby boom following World War II. The homes within the Vega Verde Addition that best demonstrate this trend are 808 Park Paseo (1951), 1254 S. Ninth St. (1950), 1272 S. Eighth St. (1952), and 1302 S. Sixth St. (1951).

The Vega Verde subdivision had a diverse population, with homeowners ranging from middle-class working families including many returning soldiers, railroad employees, and those employed in the service industry, to prominent attorneys, business owners, doctors, and politicians. Some of the most notable are listed below:

1216 S. Seventh Street	The home of Milton "Page" Farmer who was quite a character in the Las Vegas gaming community. He was part of the migration of Los Angeles nightclub and offshore casino owners who came to Las
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Vegas in 1939 during the crackdown by Los Angeles police. Not long after moving to Las Vegas he became an associate of Guy McAfee who was most noted for naming Las Vegas Boulevard "The Strip" after the Sunset Strip in Los Angeles. Farmer opened the Colony Club on Boulder Highway, which burned in 1941. He was associated with McAfee in the old Frontier Club on Fremont Street and later operated the Pioneer Club with Tutor Schere. When he left there he became part owner of the Boulder Club until his death in 1960.<sup>58</sup>

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|-----------------------|--|
| 1221 S. Eighth Street | The home of Walter Pinjuv who was active in attaining city services for the Vega Verde subdivision after a long wait during the war. <sup>59</sup> |
| 1226 S. Eighth Street | The home of Clifford Paice, a prominent dentist in Las Vegas. <sup>60</sup>  |
| 1261 S. Eighth Street | The home of Dr. Harry E. Fightlin who was Sunrise Hospital Chief of Staff and heavily involved in the treatment of tuberculosis locally.           |
| 1250 S. Ninth Street  | The home of Allen Bunker, brother of Bryan Bunker and co-owner of Bunker Brother's Mortuary.   |
| 1260 Eighth Place     | The home of Roger "Rube" Jolley who as president of KLAS TV, introduced television to Las Vegas in 1953. <sup>61</sup>                             |

### **Criterion C**

The Park Place Addition and the Vega Verde subdivision represent the evolution of architectural styles that occurred within the context of twentieth-century suburban development, and would define a major shift in the American ethos following World War II. Park Place characterized the pre-war styles, generically called Period Revival, and Vega Verde began with the transitional Minimal Traditional style during the war, ending in the early 1950s with a fully-developed Ranch-style house.

The earliest homes in the Park Place Addition were not unlike many of the homes in the early subdivisions of Las Vegas, reflecting the popular Period Revival styles favored by the wealthy for their simplified historic aesthetic. The Period Revival style is a broad architectural category that includes the Tudor and Colonial Revival styles, both prominent in the Park Place Addition. These styles were generally popular in the United States from about 1910 to the early 1940s. Several trends in art and architecture responded to the waning of the Victorian era. One was the Arts and Crafts Movement that in addition to reacting to Victorian fussiness with a sense of order and purpose, also sought to reject the dehumanizing affects of the machine age. The

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58 "Famed Las Vegas Gambler Succumbs". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. September 9, 1960.

59 "City Promises Cooperation in Vega Verde Improvements". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. August 7, 1947.

60 John S. Park Neighborhood Association. *The Historic John S. Park Neighborhood Plan*. Las Vegas: August 2001.

61 "KLAS Television is on the Air in Vegas". *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. July 22, 1953.

signature architectural style of this movement was the homey Craftsman bungalow, which became a ubiquitous symbol of western back-to-nature living.

The other notable architectural response to Victorian styles was the “Academic Reaction” led by the influential New York firm of McKim, Mead, and White. This approach was marked by “a return to formal, disciplined order and the literal, archaeological adaptation of historical styles that had gone out with the Greek Revival”.<sup>62</sup> This brought about renewed interest in historical European designs, and a new interest in America’s colonial past. The early twentieth century saw a resurgence of interest in a variety of period styles that were “safe and conservative designs.” These reflected historical ancestors like half-timbered manor houses of Tudor England, and country estates of Normandy and Spain. The wealthy were the first to embrace these styles and they kept prestigious American architectural firms busy. Over the course of several decades, however, these popular revival styles spread to more modest suburban neighborhoods.<sup>63</sup> Regional expressions developed as well, with Dutch Colonial in the East, and Spanish Colonial in the West, until the 1920s when the geographical constraints were broken.

The term Period Revival is not universally employed when discussing the architecture of this era. John Milnes Baker refers to it as “Reminiscent Styles”.<sup>64</sup> In contrast to Victorian excesses, World War I architecture sought to find “simple, direct, and logical solutions,” and “artistic skill combined with practical good sense”.<sup>65</sup> Quoting from an architectural competition of 1916, Baker includes the following as an example of desirable characteristics: “A good common sense livable house should be simple and dignified, but full of charm,” and “A wise use of simple materials and simple forms is another sign of good taste which is rapidly coming into favor. The exterior is so quiet and so simple as to have the charm that goes with all restrained work”.<sup>66</sup>

The Architects’ Small House Service Bureau was established in 1919 in response to the housing shortage following World War I. In addition to the shortage of housing units, Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover (1921-1928) reported that 30 percent of the existing homes were “below American ideals of decent family life”.<sup>67</sup> The Small House Service Bureau was organized to help deal with the rash of poorly-designed houses that were being built without benefit of an architect. From its inception in 1919 to its demise in 1942, the Bureau adhered to traditional revival designs such as Dutch and New England Colonial, Tudor, Spanish, and Italian, although it offered Bungalow and “Modern American” designs, as well.<sup>68</sup> Small houses in these revival styles filled American neighborhoods between the world wars. In general, the popular Revival styles in Park Place were Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival, followed by Minimal Traditional with Revival elements such as the decorated vergeboard at 1115 5<sup>th</sup> Place. Of the 24 houses in Park Place, there is one Colonial Revival, two Neocolonial style homes, and five Tudor style homes.

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62 Carley, Rachel. *The Visual Dictionary of American Domestic Architecture*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1994.

63 Carley, Rachel.

64 Baker, John Milnes. *American House Styles*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1994.

65 Baker, John Milnes.

66 Baker, John Milnes.

67 Architects’ Small House Service Bureau. *Your Future Home: Architect-designed Houses of the Early 1920s*. Washington, D.C.: The American Institute of Architects Press, 1923. Reprinted 1992.

68 Architects’ Small House Service Bureau.

The best example of Colonial Revival in the Park Place Addition is 1107 5<sup>th</sup> Place (1942). This brick home has many of the typical design elements of this style with a steeply pitched side-gabled roof, multi-pane windows with double-hung sashes, and an accentuated Georgian door surround with pilasters. The two Neocolonial style buildings are similar, yet by definition are looser interpretations of the Colonial prototypes than the Colonial Revival. The best example of Neocolonial in the Park Place Addition is 1139 5<sup>th</sup> Place (1951). This building is one story with an asymmetrical façade and a low-pitched roof with moderate eave overhang. Without the Georgian door surround and other decorative details, this building closely resembles the Ranch form.

The Tudor style, a bit more common in the Park Place Addition, is best represented by 1033 S. Sixth Street (1942), and 1130 S. Sixth St. (1936). Both homes have steeply pitched cross-gabled roofs, multi-pane windows, tall internal chimneys and stucco finishes. The entrance of 1033 S. Sixth St. is recessed within a hexagonal tower with a hexagonal cone-shaped roof. The tower is paired with a small projection with a steeply pitched front gable, one eave of which extends into the tower façade, expressing a common Tudor design element of closely combining varying roof types, pitches and heights. The windows are three-over-one sash type and grouped in pairs or triplets on the front façade. 1130 S. Sixth St. displays a simpler roof scheme with half-timbering, and two front gables with a gently curved slope on the porch roof. A more modest example of Tudor is 1108 Fifth Place (1931) with full-length multi-pane windows, cross-gabled roof with varying pitch, and a tall, narrow vent with sill centered underneath the front gable.

By the time, Vega Verde was developed in 1941, architectural styles were moving out of the Period Revival realm, with style-defining decorative detailing, to more modern types that depict style more through form rather than decoration. The transitional phase in American architecture, particularly as American housing was proliferating in tract developments, is represented by the Minimal Traditional style. It is not surprising that the earliest styles in Vega Verde fall into this category.

Minimal Traditional was generally popular from just before World War II into the 1950s. It reflects the form of the earlier styles, but lacks the decorative detailing. Minimal Traditional homes were relatively small, usually one story, with low- or medium-pitched roofs and close eaves. Of the 160 homes in Vega Verde and Park Paseo, eight are Minimal Traditional. A good example of the Minimal Traditional style within the neighborhood is 619 Park Paseo.

Vega Verde was developed just as World War II was getting underway, with its concomitant shortage of materials and manpower that limited the number of homes built during the war years to 53, with only three of these homes built in 1943, and one in 1944. By the time the war ended, a new housing form was gaining popularity and replacing the Minimal Traditional style. This new style, known generically as Ranch, became the predominant style in the Vega Verde subdivision.

Ranch style traces its origins to the 1930s, when several internationally-renown modernist architects were designing highly technical, low, spare houses in Southern California. It also drew inspiration from Spanish Colonial forms of the American southwest, with influences of



later Craftsman and Prairie designs. The “rambling” Ranch style was well suited to the sprawling suburban subdivisions and the more casual lifestyle of the postwar era.

The style reflected a consumer preference for a larger, more open and informal floor plan, allowing for the addition of hobby rooms and utility rooms. The Ranch style also represented the merging of the urban lifestyle within a rural setting. The typical U-shape plan incorporated a rear courtyard that could be viewed through a spacious glass wall with sliding glass doors. This patio was marketed as an “outside room.” The arrival of the air-conditioner encouraged the use of vast expanses of glass as the temperature could now be moderated.<sup>69</sup> By the late 1940s, with the emergence of the Baby Boom generation, additions were simple and common. This is reflected with the great number of additional rooms constructed in the John S. Park Historic District.

An evolution of Ranch subtypes can be seen throughout the Vega Verde subdivision, reflecting important style trends occurring in American suburban housing development. These subtypes range from a more traditional Ranch style to a contemporary, or modern Ranch style. The transition of the Ranch style is reflected in changing roof pitch, eave overhang and fenestration arrangement. Specifically, the earlier Ranch style homes have a higher pitched roof and narrower eave overhang with window arrangements and size similar to that of the Minimal Traditional. As the 1940s progress, the Ranch style begins to reflect a more modern style, adapting the horizontal elements of the Prairie and Craftsman styles with lower pitched roofs, wider eave overhang, and trading the front gable for a hipped roof. In addition, the later Ranch styles incorporate a more spacious floor plan. The houses that reflect this later style are the least common in this neighborhood, the most prominent being built in the early 1950s, such as the Luzier home at 1254 S. Ninth St. (1951). There are 123 contributing Ranch style homes in Vega Verde and Park Paseo.

## **Summary**

The John S. Park Historic District, including the Park Place Addition and the Vega Verde Addition, has been determined to be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. The district represents the evolution of architectural styles that occurred within the context of twentieth-century suburban development and architectural design, defining the rapidly changing culture of the post war American family. Most importantly, the historic national and local trends and events that influenced the architecture and subdivision design of the John S. Park Historic District continue to be easily recognizable within the cohesive historic fabric that has survived throughout the years.

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## **10. Geographical Data**

### **Verbal Boundary Description**

The John S. Park Historic District is located south of downtown Las Vegas. The general boundaries are Las Vegas Boulevard and South Ninth Street to the west and east, and Charleston Boulevard and Franklin Avenue to the north and south, respectively. The historic district consists of two residential subdivisions: the earlier Park Place Addition and the Vega Verde Subdivision. The Park Place Addition is located on the western half of the historic district and is bounded by the west side of Fifth Place and the west side of S. Sixth Street on the west and east, and the south side of Park Paseo and roughly Franklin Avenue on the north and south, respectively. The Vega Verde Subdivision is bounded by the east side of S. Sixth Street and the west side of S. Ninth Street on the west and east, and the north side of Park Paseo and the north side of Franklin Avenue on the north and south, respectively.

### **Boundary Justification**

The John S. Park Historic District contains two adjacent historic subdivisions: the Park Place Addition, which began development in 1931, and the Vega Verde Addition, which began development in 1941. These two subdivisions have been combined under the "John S. Park Historic District" in accordance with the goals set forth in the "Historic John S. Park Neighborhood Plan," developed by the John S. Park Neighborhood Association under the guidance of the City of Las Vegas Neighborhood Services Department. This comprehensive plan, drafted in August 2001 and approved by the City of Las Vegas Planning Commission November 2001, defined the boundaries of the proposed historic district within the John S. Park neighborhood. These boundaries were designed to protect the most precious historic resources from commercial rezoning.<sup>70</sup>

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70 John S. Park Neighborhood Association. *The Historic John S. Park Neighborhood Plan*. Las Vegas: August 2001.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

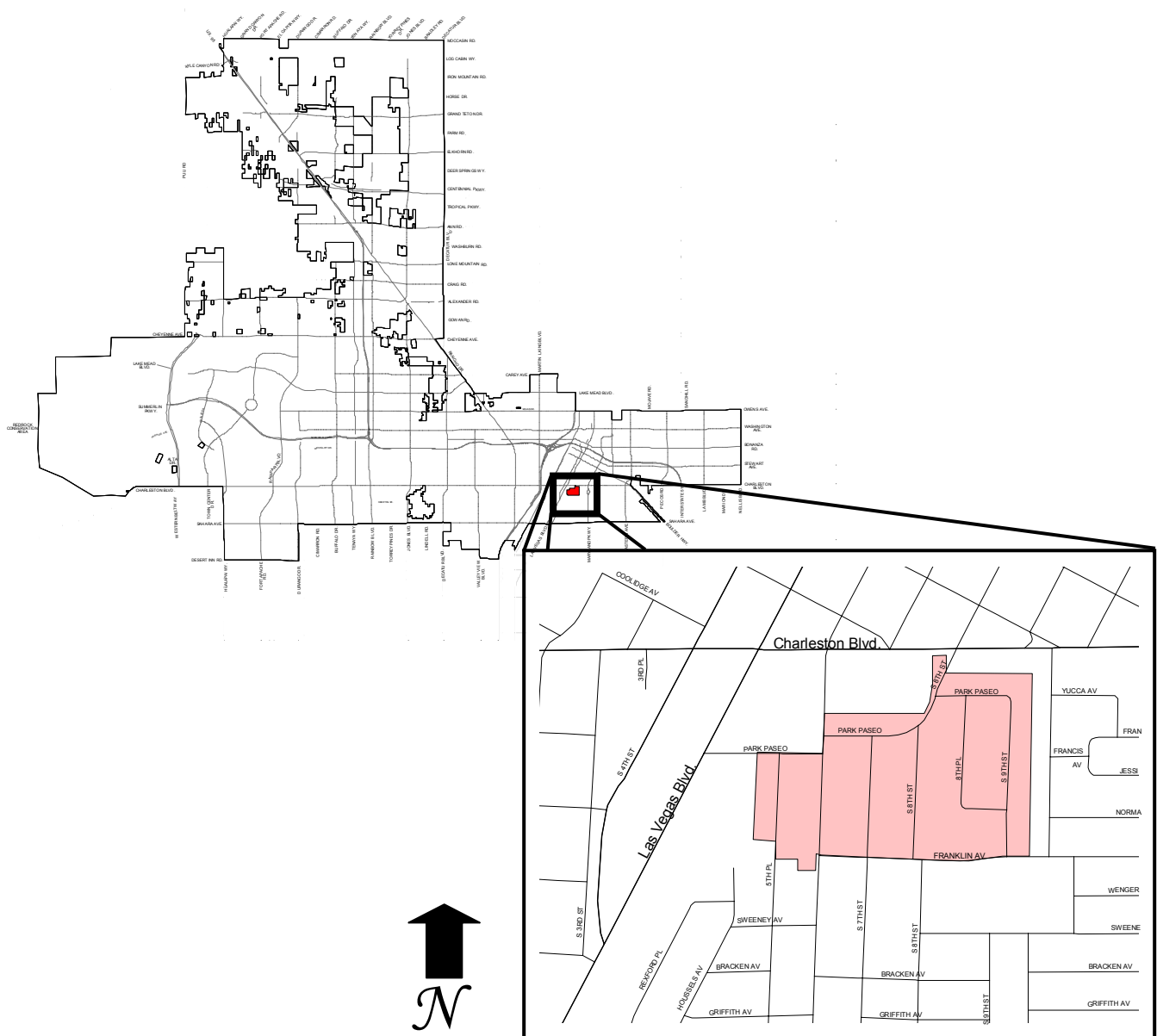
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Maps and Other Attachments Page       

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John S. Park Historic District, Clark County, Nevada

**Map of location of John S. Park Historic District within the City of Las Vegas**



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Maps and Other Attachments Page       

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John S. Park Historic District, Clark County, Nevada

**Map of John S. Park Historic District**



400 0 400 800 Feet



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Maps and Other Attachments Page       

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John S. Park Historic District, Clark County, Nevada

**Map of Non-Contributing Resources**



0.08      0      0.08      0.16 Miles

- Non-Contributing due to age -1953 or newer
- ▲ Non-Contributing due to loss of historic integrity



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

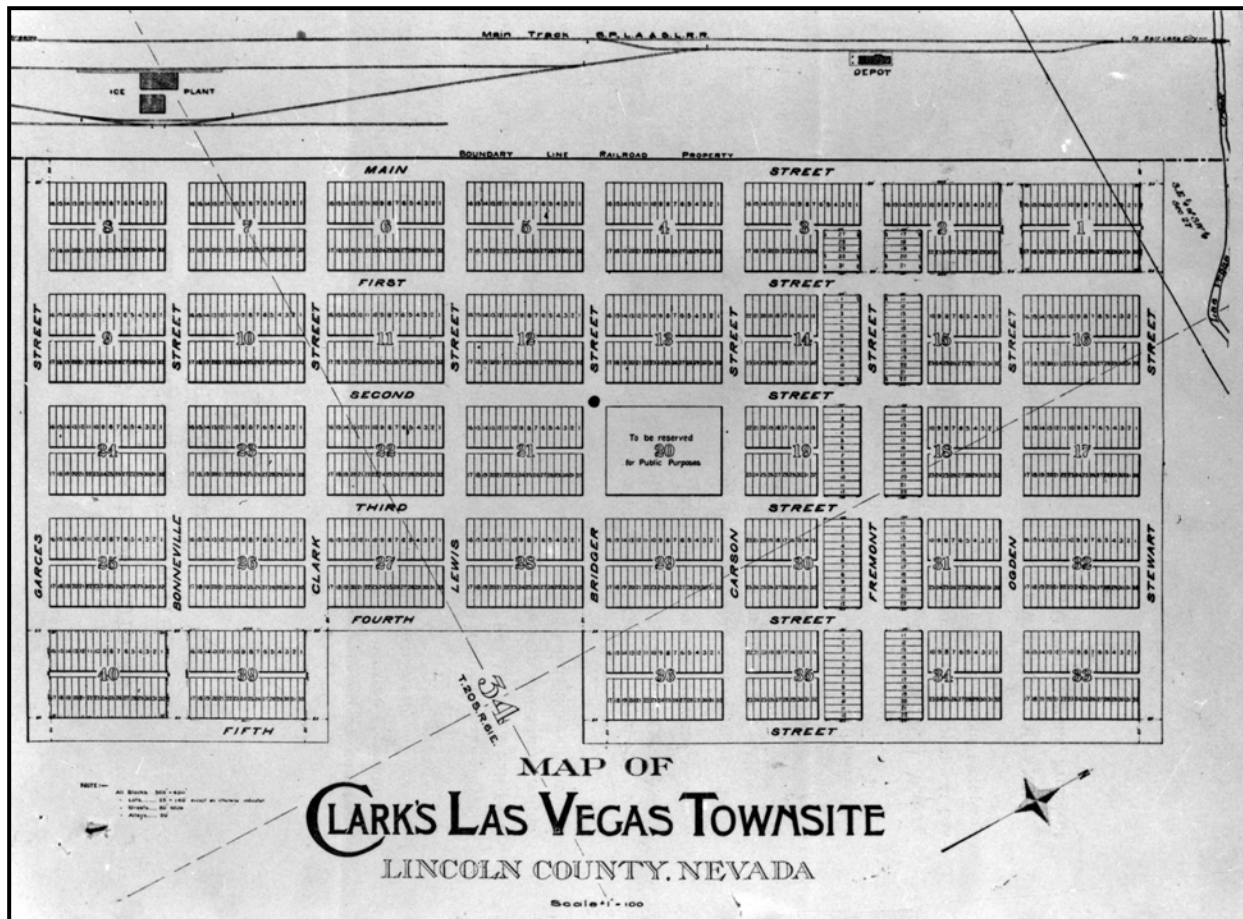
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John S. Park Historic District, Clark County, Nevada

**Original Clark's Las Vegas Townsite**





United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

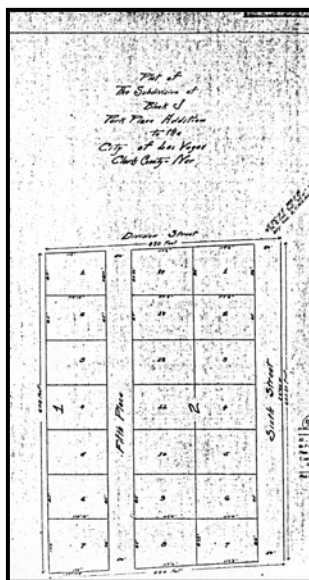
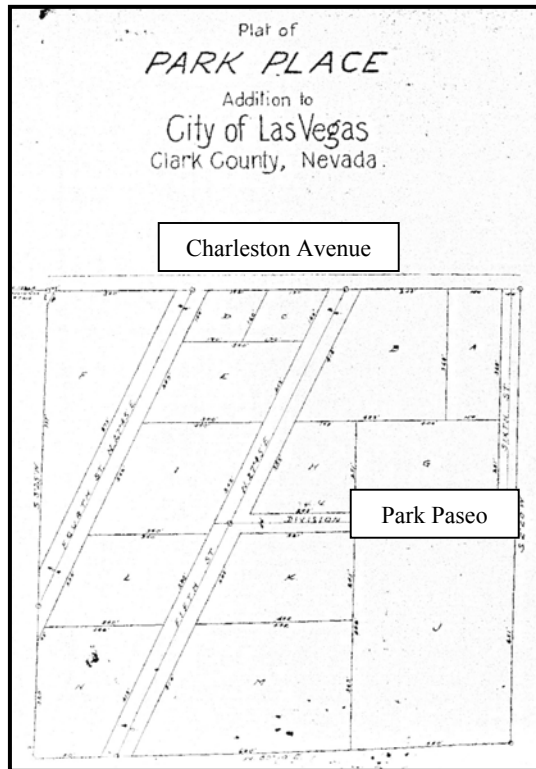
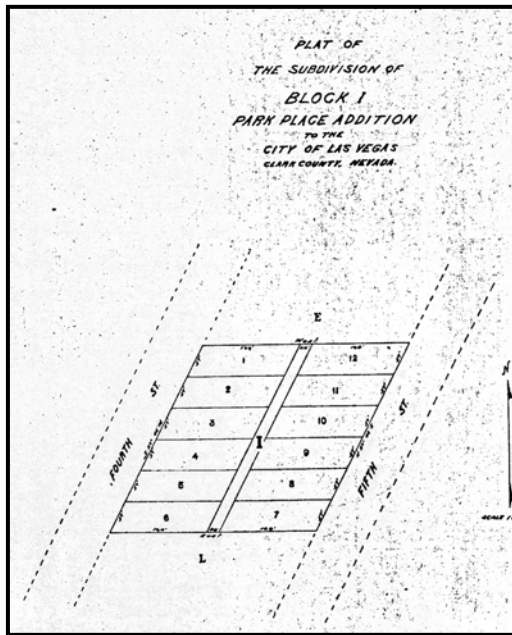
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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Maps and Other Attachments Page       

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John S. Park Historic District, Clark County, Nevada

**Original Plat of Park Place Addition**



Detail of Block J

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Maps and Other Attachments Page       

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John S. Park Historic District, Clark County, Nevada

**1928 Map of plat location of the Park Place Addition**



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

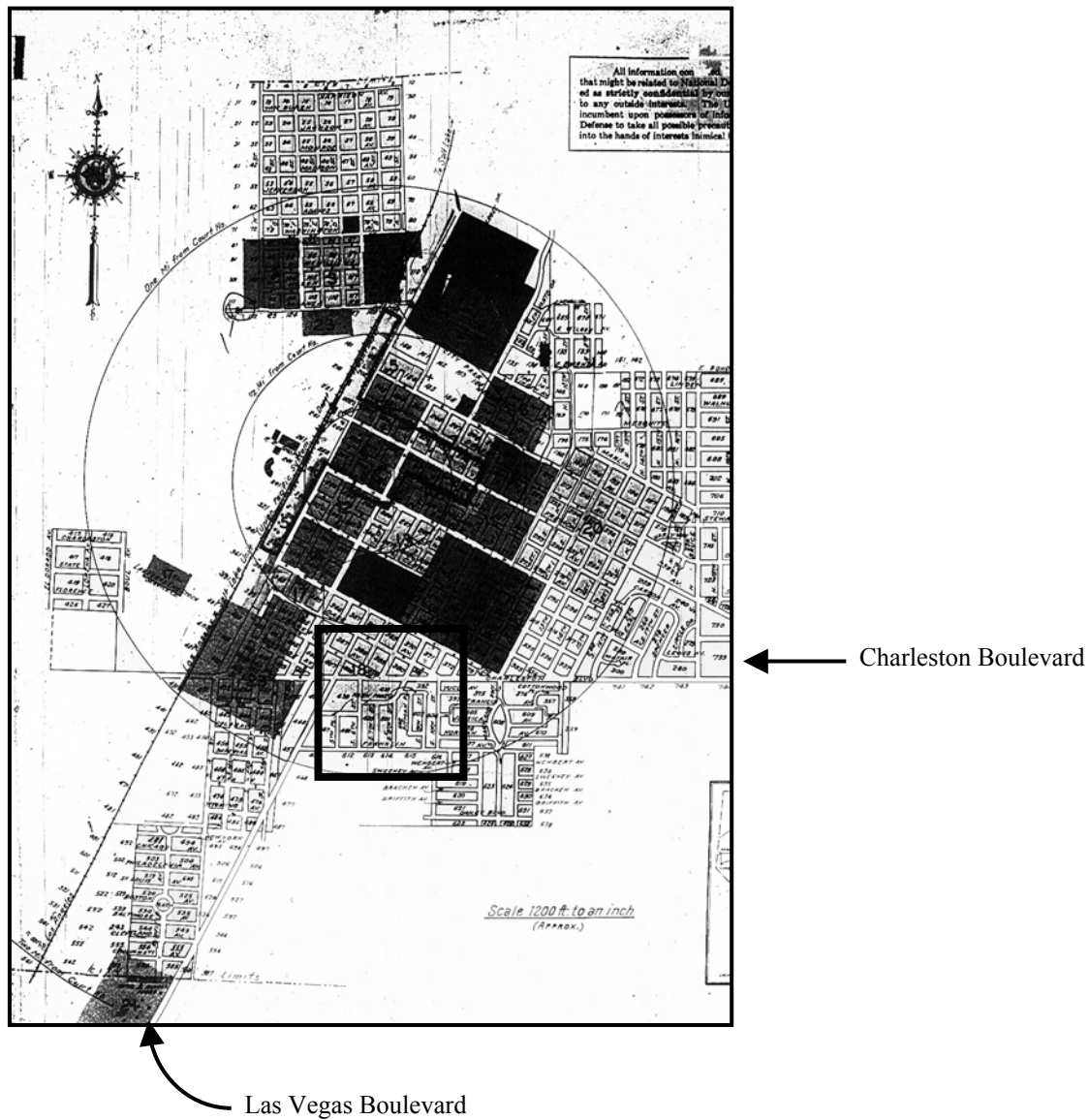
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Section Maps and Other Attachments Page       

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John S. Park Historic District, Clark County, Nevada

**1946 Sanborn Map showing streets laid out for Vega Verde Addition**



## **APPENDICES**

**Examples: State Historic Preservation Office Historic Resource Inventory Forms\***

**Indices to Photographs**

**Photographs of Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources**

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\* Copies of individual State Historic Preservation Office Historic Resource Inventory Forms are available for review at the City of Las Vegas Planning and Development Department, Comprehensive Planning.